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with him. It is proved beyond a shadow of doubt that the position of a negro in such circumstances is difficult, that race prejudices are not easily overcome, that a rash and obstinate man may involve even well-meaning people in a ghastly situation. There is material enough here, surely, for a novel "big" enough to satisfy any one. But for good measure, Mr. Kester has woven into the plot the story of a high-minded young white man, John Brent of Brentwood, who has to endure the vilest slander. It is whispered that he is the son of a negro—indeed, that Dr. Brent himself is his father,—and John's mother, being insane, cannot confute the lie. The young man's purity of blood has to be vindicated in the end, of course, and the author's resourcefulness is quite equal to the task.

There are moments in the story when Dr. Brent almost becomes convincing as a human being and impressive as a victim of fate; there are times when his rôle as a half-benevolent, half-vindictive agitator on behalf of the rights of his race seems real and significant. The man has qualities—when he is himself and not a mere creature of the plot. Sometimes, too, Mr. Kester's delineation of traits is really engaging—though most of his characters are far too garrulous. The humor of the poor whites who figure in the tale is now and then natural and amusing, despite a certain sameness, and despite the dismal background of their lives that makes humor at their expense almost questionable, unmingled as it is with more than a very easy-going sympathy.

But on the whole, all the good qualities of the tale are subordinated to the requirements of a highly melodramatic plot. One example of the author's method will perhaps suffice. There is among the minor characters a negress who has frequent attacks of coma or trance. She is terribly afraid that during one of these fits she may be buried alive. Just what relation this has to the story is not at first evident. But the woman's usefulness appears when she at last dies and the negroes of her household hide some stolen money in her coffin. Later the body is exhumed that the money may be recovered. If one is extremely indulgent, one may admit that the loss and recovery of the money is managed in a proper manner; but it is difficult to invent any theory that will excuse the author for having made the body move in the grave. This touch of superfluous horror is crudely shocking, and nothing more.

THE REBIRTH OF RUSSIA. By Isaac F. Marcossou. New York: John Lane Company, 1917.

It is frankly as a journalistic work that Mr. Marcossou offers his book to the public. This it is, and more than this it could hardly be. Mr. Marcossou gives his readers a spirited and trustworthy account of the happenings of the crowded days of the Revolution in Russia—an account somewhat summary in treatment, somewhat rhetorical in style, but informing and filled with significant or striking incidents.

Occasionally the author throws out interesting suggestions as to the conditions that determined the surprisingly sane and patriotic temper of the revolutionists. One such condition was the war. Soon after the Cossacks had gone over to the popular side in Petrograd, there was

an orgy of speech-making. One curbstone orator addressing a crowd in the Nevsky said: "We must get rid of the Stürmers and the Golitisins and the Protopopoffs. The people need bread; they cannot work without it." He was interrupted by cries of "Down with the War!" whereupon he replied: "No, the war must go on. Remember the blood of our brothers and sons must not be spilt for nothing. The thing to do is to get rid of the Government." In these words, thinks Mr. Marcossou, the speaker revealed one of the principal reasons why the revolution succeeded. "A costly human sacrifice had been laid upon the altar of war, and the people were determined that this sacrifice should not be in vain." Another condition was the absence of vodka. "Indeed, it is quite evident that when the Czar signed the decree for the prohibition of liquor at the beginning of the war, he likewise signed the death-warrant of the Romanoffs."

Certain crucial moments are described briefly indeed, but with a certain dramatic effectiveness,—the abdication of the Czar, the voluntary surrender of the hated and once powerful Protopopoff to an armed civilian, Kerensky throwing himself between the arch-traitor Soukhomlinoff and the enraged crowd in the Duma; the same Kerensky leaping upon a table and by a fervent speech swaying the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers'-Delegates to the side of the provisional Government. Picturesque details, too, are by no means lacking,—as for example the story of a Boy Scout not above ten years of age who with a large Browning pistol in his hand authoritatively led a squad from one of the Guard's regiments to the capture of two policemen.

The general state of the public mind after the successful consummation of the revolution, and the troublous days that followed—days during which the demands of labor became crazily exorbitant, discipline was relaxed in the army, and it was nip and tuck between order and anarchy—are described in a manner sufficiently clear and impressive.

There follows a chapter containing sketches of the revolution-makers, the men who are for the most part the leaders of Russia today—Prince George Lvoff, Gutchkoff, Milyukoff, Rodzianko, Konovaloff, and others—all rather intimately written. From these accounts one receives a strong and very reassuring impression of character, statesmanship, and a business efficiency quite of the American type. Most interesting of all, perhaps, and most fully amplified is the character-portrait of Alexander Kerensky.

There are deficiencies in the book: for example, every one would like to know more about the origin and constitution of the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates. But considering the brief time that has elapsed since the Revolution, the book is on the whole surprisingly adequate in extent of information and in analysis of facts.

A WORLD IN FERMENT. By Nicholas Murray Butler. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1917.

There is real eloquence in Dr. Butler's addresses to his countrymen upon the larger aspects of the war, an eloquence that is not merely powerful exhortation, but inspiration. Without any shrinking from